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**FIGHTING IN INDOCHINA: REACTIONS AND OPTIONS**

**FOREWORD**

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] East Asia-Pacific Division, Office of Political Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, at the request of Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. It was based on contributions provided by analysts in the East Asia-Pacific and USSR Divisions of the Office of Political Analysis and in the Office of Strategic Research. Research was based on information available as of 19 December 1979. The memorandum has been coordinated with the Office of Economic Research and the National Intelligence Officers for China/East Asia/Pacific and USSR/Eastern Europe. Comments and queries are welcome and should be addressed to Chief, Southeast Asia Branch, Office of Political Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, [redacted]

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SUMMARY

The future actions of protagonists in the Indochina arena will depend upon the outcome of the current dry-season campaign in Kampuchea. The Vietnamese will be able to reduce Kampuchean resistance to a tolerable level for the time being at least, but, because of deeply felt anti-Vietnamese animosities harbored by all Kampuchians, the ineffectiveness of the Heng Samrin regime, and the continued Chinese willingness to resupply the insurgents, resistance in some form will continue and will probably require Vietnam to maintain a large occupying army for the foreseeable future. Vietnam may invade Thailand to attack resistance bases there and possibly "teach a lesson" to the Thai military. Hanoi is determined to achieve hegemony over the whole of Indochina regardless of economic cost and international opprobrium. [ ]

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The Chinese will probably not try to salvage the existing fragmented Kampuchean resistance by mounting a second invasion of Vietnam. They are likely to administer a "second lesson" to Vietnam only in the event Hanoi attacks Thailand in force and threatens the Bangkok regime. China has other ways of bringing pressure to bear on Vietnam, ranging from intensifying its present resupply and organizational efforts with the Kampuchean insurgents, through increasing its diplomatic and economic activities, to supporting or creating resistance in Laos. [ ]

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The Soviets will take military action against China only if Beijing mounts a sustained second invasion of Vietnam that endangers Hanoi. Otherwise, the Soviets will continue to supply Vietnam with large quantities of military and economic aid in order to help Hanoi deter or repel a second Chinese invasion. Most Soviet leaders wish to avoid armed conflict with China for fear it would hamper Soviet efforts elsewhere in the world and lead to a wider conflict. Others, however, feel that Soviet prestige would suffer if the USSR failed to respond militarily to another Chinese invasion of Vietnam. If the Soviets decided military action was appropriate, they could engage Beijing in Indochina or along the Sino-Soviet frontier. [ ]

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The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at present is united in its opposition to Vietnamese control over Kampuchea. Its unity may be put to the test, however, because of Thailand's tilt toward China, which conflicts with ASEAN nonalignment and the perception of some members that China is a long-term threat to regional security.



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## DISCUSSION

### CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA

Vietnam's dry-season campaign is entering a new phase. An estimated 200,000 Vietnamese troops are preparing to launch large-scale clearing operations to eliminate all Kampuchean resistance, especially in the western provinces near the Thai border. [ ]

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The fighting is likely to spill over into Thailand. Indeed, Hanoi believes that resistance guerrillas operate from sanctuaries in Thailand. If it does not eliminate all Kampuchean resistance during the current dry season and faces a protracted and costly guerrilla war, Hanoi might decide it must destroy guerrillas in Thailand. Vietnam has ample air and ground forces in Kampuchea that could be deployed for this purpose. Accidental clashes, leading to a greater degree of tension, could also occur along the ill-defined Thai-Kampuchean border. [ ]

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For their part, the forces of Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea will avoid major military confrontations by operating in small groups and sending larger units into relatively safe areas in the mountains and rain forest. They must also resolve problems of feeding themselves, distributing Chinese-provided supplies to small, isolated units, maintaining a communications network, and opening new infiltration and resupply routes to and from Thailand. [ ]

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Non-Communist anti-Vietnamese resistance groups reportedly conduct reconnaissance and organizational operations in western Kampuchea and have bases in refugee camps astride the Thai border. Clashes have taken place in the past between these guerrillas and Pol Pot's forces in some areas, although in others they now appear to have an understanding that defines areas of operational responsibility. The non-Communist resistance groups have neither a political front nor a unified military command. Nevertheless, they see themselves as potential flagbearers of Kampuchean resistance if Pol Pot's forces should be eliminated, and thus they represent a valuable long-term resource for the Chinese and the Thais. [ ]

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#### PROBABLE OUTCOME OF DRY-SEASON CAMPAIGN

The Vietnamese, with their superiority in numbers, firepower, and mobility, will be able to deal heavy blows to Kampuchean resistance during the current campaign and, for the time being at least, will probably reduce it to tolerable levels. In this instance, Hanoi will be able to declare a victory; international recognition of Pol Pot will decline rapidly, and, led by countries like India, many states will accept the inevitable and recognize Heng Samrin.

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Over the long haul, however, historic and deeply ingrained anti-Vietnamese animosities, coupled with the Chinese willingness to support all anti-Vietnamese guerrillas, should ensure that resistance in some form will continue indefinitely. The repressive policies of the Vietnamese, especially their unwillingness or inability to feed people in many areas, and their reported contempt for the Heng Samrin leadership will probably preclude the early establishment of an effective puppet regime able to administer the country and assume responsibility for internal security.

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#### VIETNAMESE OPTIONS AT END OF DRY SEASON

The major imponderable, along with the degree and effectiveness of Chinese pressure, is the extent to which Vietnam is willing to accept heavy political, economic, and military sacrifices over a considerable period of time to achieve hegemony over Indochina. Past experience has shown that the stubborn, unified leadership--supported by a population, in the north at least, inured to hardship by more than three decades of war--will not easily crumble or compromise on long-held goals. Continued support from the Soviet Union will strengthen Hanoi's resolve. Adverse international opinion, so far only a marginal factor, might cause Vietnam to modify its tactics, but is unlikely to force Hanoi to disavow its goal of a Vietnamese-dominated Indochina.

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At the end of the current dry-season campaign, Vietnam will probably take several short-term measures to consolidate its position:

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- Embark on a major propaganda campaign stressing the "reality" of Heng Samrin rule, at the same time making serious attempts to strengthen it. The population, weakened by malnutrition and disease, will probably remain docile for the time being.
- Remove some Vietnamese troops, again in the glare of maximum propaganda.
- Carry out a reported plan to resettle persons from overcrowded areas of Vietnam in Kampuchea. If accomplished, this would further improve the security situation for the time being--although it would also fuel Kampuchean resentment of the Vietnamese.
- Try to influence world opinion, especially that of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),\* by promising that Hanoi will not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and claiming it has no territorial designs elsewhere in the region. Hanoi is likely to be tough minded in dealing with these states, and may make demands on Thailand in particular to modify its present pro-China policy.

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Thereafter, Vietnamese actions will depend on the nature of Kampuchean resistance and the ability of the guerrillas to sustain a protracted struggle. Hanoi will have four options, listed in descending order of probability:

- Maintain a large occupying army for the foreseeable future, possibly making token reductions with maximum propaganda exposure. This option would result in a war of attrition with a cyclical pattern of intensity depending on the weather. The Kampuchean people would be subjected to continuing violence, starvation, and disruption. More than ever, they would tend to seek refuge in Thailand.

\* A group of non-Communist states comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines.

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- Withdraw the majority of Vietnamese troops and seek to strengthen the Heng Samrin regime using remaining forces as a prop, with the expectation that some resistance is inevitable. The danger to Hanoi is that the reduced troop level and the ineffectiveness of the puppet government would allow resistance to burgeon.
- Negotiate a compromise settlement and withdraw Vietnamese troops after a period of time. Hanoi would find this difficult to accept: it has stated publicly that the position of the Heng Samrin regime is "irreversible." Furthermore, because of across-the-board Kampuchean animosity, Vietnamese influence with any successor government would not be assured unless Hanoi maintained a large military presence.
- Withdraw Vietnamese troops completely and leave the country in the unreliable hands of the Heng Samrin regime. The danger here is that resistance groups would be able to increase their strength rapidly, threaten Phnom Penh, and raise the specter for Hanoi of the installation of a new, Chinese-influenced government. Indeed, under these circumstances, the Heng Samrin government itself might be tempted to make a deal with China and/or Thailand.

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#### THE CHINESE FACTOR

Chinese Objectives. China's basic objectives are definable in short- and long-range terms. Over the next few months, China wishes to ensure that Kampuchean resistance will survive the dry season, and to prevent the conflict from spilling over the border into Thailand. Over the long haul, China wants to prevent Vietnam from consolidating its hold on Indochina, to impel Hanoi away from its close relationship with the Soviet Union, to force Vietnam to acknowledge China as a major power in Southeast Asia with legitimate regional interests, and coincidentally to demonstrate to the United States and the West that the Soviet Union and Vietnam can be successfully confronted.

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Chinese Reactions So Far. At present, China is supporting anti-Vietnamese resistance forces in Kampuchea, including non-Communist groups to a limited extent. It is also planning to support, and, where necessary, create an anti-regime resistance in Laos. [ ]

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The Chinese are applying psychological and military pressure on Vietnam by maintaining tensions along the Sino-Vietnam border, thereby compelling Hanoi to remain in a state of general mobilization. This exacts a considerable sacrifice in terms of men and resources and inhibits Vietnam's reconstruction and development. [ ]

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At the same time, China is attempting to isolate Vietnam diplomatically by playing on the themes of Vietnamese expansionism and repression (that is, the refugee exodus and famine in Kampuchea) in international forums. China is also trying to discourage potential foreign investors and aid donors from involvement in Hanoi's economy. Beijing tries to demonstrate its own reasonableness by maintaining the formality of border talks with the Vietnamese. [ ]

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Finally, China is trying to foster a split in the Vietnamese leadership by applying a variety of pressures intended to convince some in Hanoi to question present Vietnamese policy. [ ]

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Chinese Options in the Future. If Vietnam succeeds in substantially weakening the Kampuchean resistance by the end of the present dry season, China will be unlikely to remain quiescent. Beijing's options will be limited, however. It will do its utmost to ensure that the resistance continues. It probably will also seek to use the thousands of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand as a base on which to organize new resistance. China will also continue its attempts to isolate Vietnam politically and economically. It will probably move to strengthen its relations with non-Communist Southeast Asian states and try to persuade them to act in concert to defend themselves against a long-term Vietnamese threat to regional security. [ ]

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There are not many circumstances that might cause Beijing to go beyond these activities and mount a second

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invasion of Vietnam. It might do so if it decided Vietnamese military successes in Kampuchea were impugning China's credibility as an "ally" and regional power. The Chinese may, however, have concluded that the first invasion was too costly and even so did not force a Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea; China probably also realizes a second invasion would not save Pol Pot. It may feel that even the collapse of anti-Vietnamese resistance would not itself represent sufficient grounds for a second lesson. [REDACTED]

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The Chinese might also feel a "second lesson" was called for if Vietnam drove deep into Thailand, threatened the Bangkok regime, caused heavy Thai casualties, and occupied Thai territory. Recent public statements by senior Chinese officials, including Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, tend to link China's credibility to Thailand's territorial integrity. China has been careful, however, not to commit itself to any specific course of action, in order both to avoid precipitous involvement from which it would have trouble extricating itself and to keep the Vietnamese off balance. [REDACTED]

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Should China decide a second lesson was required, it need not necessarily repeat its large-scale offensive along the length of the border. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Beijing's options in case of a second lesson would include:

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- Mounting a heavy ground strike against one or more major targets inside Vietnam, such as the border city of Mong Cai, which suffered relatively little damage during the February invasion, or against specific economic targets along Vietnam's northeast coast. After destroying its objective, China could once again withdraw.
- Striking through Laos, a course that would have the advantage of demonstrating Hanoi's weakness as a protector but would accomplish little militarily because of the nonstrategic nature of available targets. This would be particularly true if China limited its strike to the northern

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provinces, over which Vientiane, and by extension Hanoi, has little control. Furthermore, the difficult nature of the terrain and the logistic difficulties involved make it unlikely that China would find this an attractive target. A strike into Laos might also incur adverse world and regional reaction; many countries would feel China was committing aggression against a small and neutral third party.

- Launching a major airstrike against selected Vietnamese targets. This would have the advantage of being highly visible, over quickly, and less costly than ground operations. It would have little impact, however, on Vietnamese actions in Kampuchea or Thailand; should many aircraft be lost to Vietnam's effective air defense system, it could be portrayed as a Chinese defeat.
- Sending volunteers to fight in Kampuchea or Thailand. This seems unlikely; China probably feels it is too late to deploy troops to Kampuchea; and even if China were willing to send troops to Thailand, Bangkok would probably reject the offer.
- Attacking Vietnamese forces in the Spratly Islands. This would be difficult because of equipment and support limitations; it would also probably have little deterrent effect on the Vietnamese and might involve political repercussions because the Philippine Government also claims several of the Spratly Islands.

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China and a Second Invasion. A number of deterrents inhibit China from administering a large-scale "second lesson":

- The formidable buildup of Vietnamese forces, increasingly equipped with modern Soviet weapons, along the Sino-Vietnamese border, making a second invasion even more costly than the first.

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- Possible divisions within the Chinese leadership. The first invasion apparently caused much debate before and after the event, although it may also have been used by opponents of Deng Xiaoping as a tactic, rather than an issue of substance, to attack him. The poor state of military equipment, reservations over the effects of the first invasion on China's diplomatic standing, and, above all, the costs to other sectors of China's economy were issues in the debate over tactics used against Vietnam and would become so again in the absence of a major Vietnamese attack on China.
- Possible Soviet retaliation. Although the Soviets did not respond militarily after the first invasion, Chinese leaders may believe that Moscow would be forced to do so next time because of intense pressure from Vietnam. Fear of Soviet reprisals alone, however, probably would not deter China.
- Adverse world opinion. Another invasion by China might create sympathy for Vietnam as the underdog and also reinforce fears of the ASEAN states--especially Indonesia and Malaysia--of Chinese expansionism.

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Indications and Warning. We are likely to detect Chinese preparations for a major assault--either an attack with limited objectives or a full-scale invasion--against Vietnam or Laos. Chinese forces near the border with Vietnam number between 150,000 and 200,000 men, and, in view of the major Vietnamese buildup of forces north of Hanoi since March, this number would not be adequate to launch a successful major campaign. Any large Chinese reinforcement effort, however, would take less time than that for the February invasion because of experience gained and because some logistic equipment was left near the border.

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We would be less likely to receive advance warning if the Chinese chose to make a small thrust against a single specific target because troops already in the border area are probably enough to mount a localized assault with a minimum of preparation.

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We would be unlikely to detect preparations for small-scale operations in Laos. The Chinese maintain limited defense troops along the border and a main force division within 100 kilometers; these forces would be enough to conduct shallow, small-scale harassment attacks inside Laos. [REDACTED]

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The Chinese can easily and without warning, increase the number of incidents along the Sino-Vietnamese border, such as shallow ground penetrations or overflight of Vietnamese territory by combat aircraft. China's naval presence in the South China Sea could also be strengthened quickly. [REDACTED]

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#### THE SOVIET FACTOR

The Soviets will not take military action against China if China does not reinvade Vietnam. This section discusses the options available to the Soviets in this event and the factors that will influence their decision. We emphasize, however, that the probability that Moscow will need to exercise any of these options is as low as the prospects for a second Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Should the Chinese not invade, the Soviets will carry on as they are doing at present--that is, sending military equipment and a limited number of advisers to Vietnam, using Soviet aircraft to ferry troops and supplies to Kampuchea, and supplying large amounts of economic aid, including food, to ease the burden on Vietnam. [REDACTED]

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Current Soviet Assessmet. Publicly, the Soviets support Vietnam's contention that the victory of the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea is "irreversible," but [REDACTED] some Soviet leaders privately doubt that Vietnam will succeed in eliminating all Kampuchean resistance during the current dry season and have predicted that Vietnam may eventually be forced to negotiate a compromise. [REDACTED]

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Moscow provides large amounts of military and economic aid to Hanoi, hoping that a strong Vietnam will deter or repel a second Chinese invasion and thus forestall the need for a direct Sino-Soviet confrontation. Since the February invasion, Moscow has reportedly delivered at least \$500 million in military aid to Vietnam--an amount that represents a tenfold increase over 1978 and is some 25 percent higher than all Soviet military aid over the five preceding years. So far in 1979 the Soviets have sent Vietnam more aircraft than in any single year since 1954, plus some 200 tanks and 24 naval vessels.

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Soviet Options If Chinese Reinvade Vietnam. The Soviets could of course choose not to take military action against the Chinese and instead intensify their present efforts. Should Moscow decide to intervene militarily, however, it could act against the Chinese either in Indochina or along the Sino-Soviet border.

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If the Soviets chose to intervene in Indochina, they could:

- Deploy additional naval units to patrol the coast off Vietnam.
- Increase their military involvement, currently limited to advisory roles and some combat support functions. They might step up their activity either in Vietnam itself to support Vietnamese troops in the Sino-Vietnamese border area, or in Kampuchea to free Vietnamese troops for combat against the Chinese. They could, for instance, supply antiaircraft and ground attack helicopter and fighter-bomber units.
- Send to Vietnam a light division-size task force, consisting of two airborne regiments plus antitank and antiaircraft units. This force could be sent rapidly, within a week, and might be suitable for bolstering Vietnamese positions against Chinese attacks.
- Deploy to Vietnam a force equal to a Soviet combined-arms army--a force of three to five divisions plus supporting units totaling around 50,000 to 60,000 men. This would take

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one or two months and would require a large, unprecedented air and sea lift along a long and vulnerable supply line. If there was sufficient time, however, the force could decisively influence the military situation.

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Moscow could exercise a number of options along the Sino-Soviet border in case of a second Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Initially the Soviets could:

- Launch a psychological campaign threatening the use of force against China, including propaganda and diplomatic warnings going beyond Soviet statements last February. At that time, the Soviets merely warned China to stop before it was too late and leaked to the press a story that all Soviet troops had been placed on alert.
- Mount conspicuous military exercises along the Sino-Soviet border. These would probably not affect the situation in Vietnam but would represent a powerful reminder of Soviet military supremacy in the border area and also would increase Soviet combat readiness.

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If these measures were not successful, the Soviets could:

- Mount small-scale offensive operations--for instance, reoccupy disputed riverine islands or harass Chinese border guards--using some of the approximately 60,000 well-armed KGB border forces.
- Launch punitive air attacks against military and industrial targets throughout northern China. The Soviets have air supremacy along the border; there would be little immediate risk of major Chinese retaliation in kind although a token retaliatory strike is possible.
- Launch regimental-size raids with relative impunity against Chinese light infantry and cavalry units in the border area. None of the 23 or 24 active Soviet divisions within 200

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kilometers of the border is manned at full war-time strength, but most could field at least one regimental-size unit within 24 hours and could be brought up to strength within 48 hours by mobilizing local reservists.

- Launch a full-scale coordinated conventional assault into northern Manchuria to destroy selected military and industrial targets and to seize Chinese territory. Moscow could then try to exchange such territory for Vietnamese land occupied by the Chinese. [ ]

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How the Soviets Would Choose. Soviet decisionmaking is based on a complex worldwide and long-term calculus of interests. Policy toward Indochina does not proceed in a regional vacuum: the possibility that Soviet military action against China might bring about a long-range anti-Soviet alliance between the United States and China, as well as the implications of events like the invasion of Afghanistan, need to be balanced against specific objectives in Indochina. [ ]

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There are few clues about what options the Soviets would choose in the event of a second Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Moscow's response would depend on the severity of the Chinese action and the threat it posed to the Vietnamese regime. If the Chinese military action was more sustained than the first invasion, but did not pose a direct threat to Hanoi, Moscow might adopt a more threatening propaganda tone but would probably limit its actions to intensifying the type of support it is already providing. [ ]

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Soviet decisionmaking would become immeasurably more difficult if a Chinese invasion appeared open-ended. Most Soviet leaders probably oppose multidivision operations into China because of the danger of involvement in a prolonged ground war and escalation into a more widespread conflict. These leaders, aware of the uncertainties involved in a military move against the Chinese, especially the United States' reaction thereto, would be anxious not to impair important Soviet interests elsewhere in the world and would also wish to keep open the possibility of improving Sino-Soviet relations. They would probably point out that Moscow's treaty commitments do not require the USSR to come to the defense of the Vietnamese and in

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fact were phrased precisely to prevent Vietnam from embroiling the USSR in a wider war. They would question whether any of the military options along the Sino-Soviet border would necessarily compel a Chinese withdrawal from Vietnam. [ ]

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Some elements in the leadership, however, might wish to teach China a lesson. They would argue for military action along the Sino-Soviet border or for some degree of Soviet military involvement in Indochina itself. In their view, Moscow would pay a heavy political price if it failed to come to the aid of its Vietnamese ally. Furthermore, they would reason that the Soviets have military supremacy and could deal with any possible Chinese retaliation. [ ]

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#### Indications and Warning. [ ]

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[ ] We would not immediately detect the deployment of small numbers of Soviet combat support units, pilots, or additional advisers to either Vietnam or Kampuchea. [ ]

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If the Soviets chose to move along the Sino-Soviet border, they could launch small-scale ground attacks up to regimental size or a large-scale air assault within hours, and neither the United States nor China would be able to detect preparations. A large-scale conventional invasion of China would require several weeks' preparation and the mobilization of all forces along the border; we would be able to detect such preparations soon after they were under way. [ ]

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#### ASEAN REACTIONS

Current Policy. The collective foreign policy of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations since 1971 has been based on the concept of "Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality," which seeks to accommodate the interests of the United States, China, and the Soviet Union in the region and thereby obtain their assurances that they will not intervene militarily. To this end ASEAN members are publicly committed to nonalignment. This policy, and indeed the unity of ASEAN itself, may be put to the test because of events in Indochina. [ ]

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Before the emergence of a powerful Vietnam, most ASEAN states saw China as the major external threat. All are now concerned that Vietnam in future may try to export revolution. Several states, however, still fear China's long-term intentions and may in time come to believe that a strong Indochina under Vietnamese control would represent a useful counterweight to China. In the meantime, because they see Thailand as their frontline state on Indochina, they give prime weight to Bangkok's policy recommendations. Some ASEAN members, however--particularly Malaysia and Indonesia--fear that Thailand's obvious tilt toward China could upset ASEAN neutralism, increase Vietnam's animosity toward ASEAN, and encourage Vietnam as well as the two Communist superpowers to interfere in ASEAN's internal politics.

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Thailand. Bangkok's policy at present is convergent with that of China--that is, to try to bring about a neutral Kampuchea (and Laos) free of Vietnamese control. It is increasingly concerned, however, at the possibility of a Vietnamese retaliatory strike into Thailand and if this occurs would probably seek aid from the United States.

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Thailand is unlikely to encourage a negotiated settlement in Kampuchea until military options based on resistance guerrillas are exhausted. It might, however, welcome a Vietnamese initiative for a compromise solution at the end of the dry-season campaign, believing that this would constitute a defeat for Vietnam and signal Hanoi's realization of its inability to eliminate Kampuchean resistance.

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On the other hand, Thailand might change its pro-resistance policy to one of recognition of the Heng Samrin regime if:

- A major Vietnamese cross-border attack on Thai forces took place without a strong reaction--that is, more than a verbal protest--from either the United States or China; or
- Vietnam eliminated all organized resistance during the dry-season campaign.

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Other ASEAN States. Malaysia and Indonesia fear China as a long-term threat because of domestic considerations: Malaysia has a large (35 percent) ethnic Chinese minority and a Communist insurgency controlled by ethnic Chinese, and Indonesia believes that China aided the Indonesian Communist Party's attempt to gain control of the government in 1965. Both countries adopt a cautious and nonconfrontational approach to Vietnam. If Vietnamese troops effectively eliminated Kampuchean resistance over the next few months, Malaysia and Indonesia might press for a modification of the present hardline policy in order to accommodate the new reality. [REDACTED]

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Singapore, an island nation dependent upon free sea lanes for its survival, sees the Soviet Union as the major external threat, and is unhappy at Vietnam's reliance on Moscow. It believes that attempts at compromise with Vietnam will fail, and takes the strongest anti-Vietnamese posture in ASEAN. Singapore urges the establishment of an ASEAN security grouping or at least increased cooperation on security matters within the ASEAN framework. This is opposed by other ASEAN states, especially Malaysia and Indonesia, for fear it might alienate Vietnam. [REDACTED]

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Manila seems content to defer to the rest of ASEAN and has made few public statements other than those generally in support of ASEAN policy. Because of its relative geographical isolation from the Indochina arena, its security is least threatened--with the exception of its dispute with Vietnam over ownership of part of the Spratly Islands. Manila is unlikely to mount any initiative that might undermine ASEAN unity and will probably support the majority position, whatever the outcome in Indochina. [REDACTED]

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